

Education sector not ready to develop AI-based skilled workforce: experts

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Government officials and educationists said on Saturday that the country's education sector was not ready to create workforces skilled in artificial intelligence.

For entering the artificial intelligence-based job market, at a seminar they emphasised immediate adopting of relevant academic courses, skilled teachers, infrastructure and other facilities and policies.

The seminar titled 'AI-based job market: how prepared Bangladesh's education system to prepare skilled workforces in ICT is' was organised by the BCS General Education ICT Cadres Association at a hotel in the capital.

Professor Md Imdadul Islam, from the Jahangirnagar University department of computer science and engineering, pointed out the lack of a national strategy and laws related to AI, educational courses, necessary infrastructure and skilled teachers and workforces as the main problems keeping the country far behind the competition in the AI-based job market.

He urged the authorities concerned to introduce AI-based courses in the universities and modernise the vocational training institutions, while stressing developing expert resources.

Md Rafiqul Islam Sujon, education specialist at UNICEF Bangladesh, said that still in the country the education system was text-based while the students should be assessed in a more creative way to improve their skills.

He also stressed the coordination between demand and supply, while focusing on the vision for bringing changes in the education system for preparing students for the AI-based job market.

A keynote paper presented by the association, while pointing out that students study information and communication technology as mandatory subject from Class VI to Class XII, observed that they still lacked the ICT-based competency.

It put down the problem to the lack of subject-based teachers.

Under National University in 125 renowned colleges the number of ICT teachers is 125 who are teaching about 14.5 lakh students, the keynote mentions.

The seminar was attended, among others, by Jahangirnagar University pro-vice-chancellor and chief guest of the event Professor Md Nurul Islam, its associate professor Md Rafsan Jani, Medical Education and Family Welfare Division deputy secretary Md Akhtaruzzaman and BCS General Education ICT Cadres Association president Md Masudur Rahman.

In the 2024 Frontier Technology Readiness Index, published by the the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, assessing country-based ability to adopt advanced technologies, including AI, Bangladesh was ranked 112th out of 170 countries.